

DoD NAF Health Benefits Program (HBP) Information

Issue 15

September 2005

1. My Pyramid
2. Health Care Trends

USDA Unveils New Food Pyramid

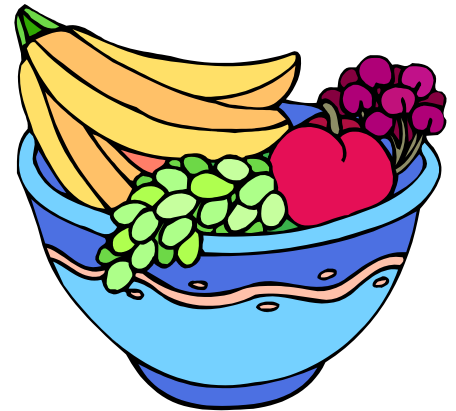
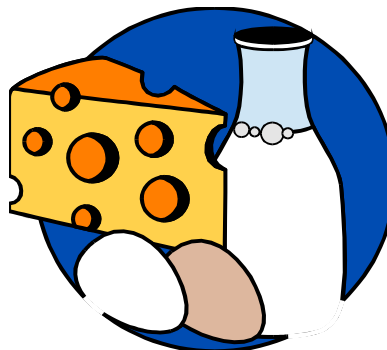
USDA New Food Pyramid

Healthy nutrition and physical wellness are topics that are addressed daily in each of our lives. The government, the media, physicians and teachers all work diligently to keep us apprised of new discoveries, studies and information relating to these very important topics. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently developed and published a new food pyramid that focuses on a broad range of factors affecting our nutrition and physical wellness. These factors include: physical activity, variety, proportionality, moderation, gradual improvement, and personalization. The newly unveiled USDA food guidance system, titled "My Pyramid," takes an individualized approach to people, accounting for varying lifestyles and needs.

An important first step to learning and understanding My Pyramid is to visit the website, www.mypyramid.gov. You will be able to take a tour of the new pyramid, learn about the food groups included, learn more about the levels of physical activity necessary to keep you healthy, and link up to even more resources relating to nutrition and health. The My Pyramid website can provide each user with an individual as-

essment of nutrition and physical activity. Individual profiles are analyzed and compared to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, published in 2005. Additionally, physical activity is scored and nutrient intake sources are outlined to give you a better understanding of which nutrient levels you are meeting, and which ones need to be increased.

Nutrition and exercise are important to growing children and adults. The My Pyramid website is generally geared toward adult nutrition, but there are many websites dedicated to information for children. Be sure to check out www.kids.gov and www.kidshealth.org, two websites that focus on health guidelines for parents and children. Learning about and engaging in healthy diet and exercise routines as a family can lead to permanent healthy nutrition and exercise habits.



Health Care Cost Trends

Recent studies conclude that employers and employees are expected to experience double-digit increases in health plan costs in 2006. To keep the impact lower, health plans will have to incorporate strategies to encourage members to use wellness programs, and eliminate or minimize harmful behavior, implement coinsurance structures, and/or increase copays and deductibles, and monitor health care providers and third party administrators to ensure that competitive rates and services are being offered. The NAF HBP will be looking at these options as well as others for the purpose of keeping costs down for employees and employers in 2006.

Aetna Navigator

Log onto Aetna Navigator this month. At www.aetna.com you may check your claim activity, explanation of benefits and find a doctor in your area.